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Important Fact for Prelims (29 August 2018)

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Navalekha Project

Google announced Navalekha Project at the fourth edition of the Google For India event which will help vernacular newspaper and magazine digitalize and go online really fast and with minimum resources.

Features

- This will be a new feature of Google Go(a tailor-made app for Google Search for India) which was launched last year. It will read web pages while highlighting the text word-by-word in real-time.
- This new feature is accessible in 28 languages including English, Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Malayalam, and Tamil, and will be available in all countries where Google Go has been launched.
- It uses artificial intelligence to detect and read the most important information on a webpage in a natural-sounding voice.
- AI also helps determine which parts of a page to read and which to leave out. It even works on 2G connections and does not consume much data.
- The other major announcement was the rebranding of Google's Tez payment app as Google Pay with deeper integration with online and offline retailers as well as access for instant loans via the Bhim UPI.

Russia Biggest War Games: Vostok 2018

- Russia in September will hold its largest war exercise since the fall of the Soviet Union.
- More than 300,000 troops will participate in war games.
- The Vostok-2018 exercise will take place across Far East Russia and Siberia.
- China and Mongolia will also participate in this exercise.

Lakhwar Multipurpose Project

- Union Minister for Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation has signed MoU with Chief Ministers of 6 states for construction of Lakhwar Multipurpose project in Upper Yamuna Basin.
- Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan and Delhi are the six Upper Yamuna Basin states.
- The Lakhwar project was initially approved in 1976 but work on the project was suspended in 1992.
- The Lakhwar project envisages construction of a 204 m high concrete dam across river Yamuna near Lohari village in Dehradun district of Uttarakhand.
- The problem of water shortage in all six States will be resolved once the project is complete as water flow in River Yamuna will improve in the dry season from December to May/June every year.
- The project is to be executed by Uttarakhand Jal Vidyut Nigam Limited (UJVL).

Hastal Minar

- Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) has prepared a detailed project report of Hastal Minar for its restoration. Hastal Minar is situated in village Hastal in New Delhi.
- It resembles the Qutub Minar in design and is also built with red sandstone and bricks.
- It is also known as 'Mini Qutub Minar' and it is believed to be built by Mughal emperor Shahjahan.
- It stands tall at 17 meters on a raised platform having three storeys, each with a reducing diameter.
- Each storey is surrounded by an octagonal ring with red sandstone chajjas, like the Qutub Minar.

Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH)

- It is a non-profit charitable organisation registered under the Societies' Registration Act, 1860.
- It was founded in 1984 in New Delhi with the vision to spearhead heritage awareness and conservation in India.
- It has pioneered the conservation and preservation of not just our natural and built heritage but intangible heritage as well.
- In 2007, the United Nations awarded INTACH a special consultative status with United Nations Economic and Social Council.

Budhamal Festival

- It is a harvesting festival celebrated once in five years in the state of Assam.

- People from different communities take part in the festival for the well being of the society and also for a good harvest.

African Swine Fever Outbreak

- UN's Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) is warning an outbreak of African Swine Fever from China to Southeast Asia or the Korean Peninsula.
- China has reported four outbreaks of the highly contagious disease in four provinces in less than a month.

African Swine Fever

- African Swine fever is a highly contagious acute hemorrhagic (means bleeding) disease of domestic pigs.
- This disease is transmitted by ticks.
- There is no antidote or vaccine, and the only known method to prevent the disease from spreading is a mass cull of the infected livestock.
- African swine fever poses no direct threat to humans.